

“What is a Transitional IEP”

Transition is about planning for life. It includes planning for academic and non-academic courses and learning experiences, employment and related training opportunities, choices about where to live in the community, and what to do for fun and socialization.

One of the goals of transition is to help teenage children have an understanding of their disability and choices to determine their future. One of the ways transition does this is by connecting your teenager to teachers and other caring adults, support services, and experiences that build skills and help them reach their goals.

Transition is based on family values, priorities, and culture, and is focused on an individual teenager’s interests, preferences, and needs.

Transition services is a term used in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that “defines a coordinated set of activities that may address, among others, the assessment, planning process, and educational and community experiences for youth with disabilities as they turn age 14. The intent of transition is to create opportunities for teenagers with disabilities that result in positive adult outcomes for life.” (1)

This may involve:

- raising expectations for youth outcomes
- engaging in the general education curriculum
- assessing for interests, preferences, and needs
- building self-awareness, self-identity, self-esteem, and self-determination skills
- utilizing the community for supports
- socializing and developing long-term relationships
- being in activities both at school and in the community
- engaging in leadership and involvement in the transition planning process

The involvement of teenagers and families are important so that as teenagers develop they can begin to understand themselves and then identify a team of caring adults who will support their journey. In our culture the primary rite of passage for all teenagers is graduating from high school. The beginning of adulthood is celebrated at this time with an expectation that your teenager will develop an increasing independence and autonomy and move on to further education, meaningful jobs, finding their own places to live, and their own friends, companions, and life in the community.

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is the document used to facilitate an individualized planning process during the transition years (14–21). The IEP must include a teenager’s present level of educational performance and his or her transition service needs, and measurable annual goals. In addition, the IEP must include any interagency responsibilities, accommodations or modifications, and a statement of the special education and related services to be provided to the teenager for the teenager to be involved and progress in the general curriculum. Since the IEP is one of the tools used to measure compliance with IDEA, comprehensive and ongoing support is important to teachers and others who are responsible for implementing the IEP.

Vision and Mission: All teenagers benefit from a caring and supportive learning environment that helps them to reach their highest potential in school, the community, at home, and in life.

- **Leadership and Accountability:** All teenagers benefit from effective leadership and responsive schools.
- **Teaching and Learning:** All youth participate in a variety of learning opportunities that help them to achieve high academic standards and that reflect the knowledge and skills needed for full participation in adult life.

- Learning Environment: All teenagers benefit from caring and dynamic learning environments within the school setting and the community at large.
- Partnerships: All teenagers experience and benefit from supportive teams made up of caring adults and their peers.
- Youth and Family: All teenagers and their families are encouraged and supported to be involved with developing policy, curricula, and evaluation methods that will raise expectations and improve the quality of education, as well as individual student outcomes.

(1) Authors note: Information for proper definition was obtained from:
Citation: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html>